The spread of musket production in central Honshu provides the subject matter for four brief segments that follow the *Kunitomo Teppoki* translation. Chapter 8 is devoted to the analysis and contextualisation of the source. The next chapter addresses the production of firearms in the well-established steel- and ironworks of Sakai, on the shores of Osaka Bay, and Chapter 10 deals with Negoro. Chapter 11 concludes the story with a discussion of musket production in Kyushu, the homeland of the Bongo lordship and of Satsuma, whose Shimazu rulers were Tanegashima's overlords.

The final chapter deals with the presence of St Francis Xavier in Japan. Xavier arrived in Japan in 1549 and left in 1551. His primary objective was, predictably, Christian proselytisation, but his experiences compelled him to change his strategy from relying on the central authority – the emperor or the *shogun* – to forging alliances with individual *daimyo*. The provincial lords, highly competitive with their neighbours, were indeed likely to permit proselytisation in exchange for trade and particularly weapons technology. This strategic shift heavily influenced both Jesuit fortunes in sixteenth-century Japan and the spread of firearms.

Lidin's approach to the material is consistent with the analytical presentation, well established in the field of Oriental studies, of newly translated Far Eastern historical and philosophical texts. Nonetheless, he makes a concerted effort to transcend the 'translation and commentary' venue and provides, in addition to his invaluable renderings of the Japanese texts, a historical analysis of the early years of the Portuguese presence in Japan. As a result, however, the book represents a sometimes uneasy marriage of two approaches. The difficulties manifest themselves most prominently in the structure of work, in terms of thematic transitions and the sequencing of chapters. Key information is unfortunately buried in the extensive endnotes or hidden within unrelated passages in subsequent chapters. There is also a tendency to repetition, particularly in Chapters 1 and 5.

Finally, Lidin's work with the Portuguese sources seems weaker by far than his handling of the Japanese material. Wherever possible Portuguese primary sources and literature were used in translation, and some Portuguese words are misspelled. The latter defect might be due to a certain amount of carelessness at the press, but it is difficult to apportion the blame. Yet, its flaws notwithstanding, Lidin's *Tanegashima* represents an essential contribution to the study of early European overseas expansion by making key Japanese sources on early contact with the Portuguese available to an English-speaking audience in a broader contextual framework.

Ivana Elbl, *Trent University*

Peter Cain, *Hobson and Imperialism: Radicalism, New Liberalism, and Finance 1887-1938*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002. ix + 320 pp. ISBN 0-19-820390-X

J.A. Hobson (1858-1940) was a man of many parts. Journalist, editorialist, pamphleteer, essayist, biographer, social critic, economic thinker, and political theorist, he was a lively and informed commentator on a range of economic, social, and political phenomena spanning nearly two generations from the mid-1880s depression in Britain to the onset of World War II. He wrote about three dozen pamphlets and books, some of which were reissued in multiple editions, and dozens of essays and articles. The list of Hobson's writings cited by Peter Cain alone contains more than 100 entries dealing not only with imperialism, but also such subjects as poverty, employment, economic theory, contemporary politics, and post-World War I international relations.

Many aspects of Hobson's work have received scholarly attention in recent years, which have also seen the issue of two biographies. Yet, except amongst a small group of scholars, Hobson remains best if not solely known in hyphenation with V.I. Lenin as an author of a particular financial explanation for modern European imperialism that he advanced in 1902 in *Imperialism: A Study*. This explanation has itself been caricatured and rendered common-

place in textbooks for nearly half a century, where it has usually tended to be summarised in a manner as to best secure its repudiation.

Thus Hobson's wider historical reputation rests primarily, if rather shakily, on *Imperialism*. The latter work is in two parts, with Part I (which contains Hobson's financial analysis of imperialism) attracting a lion's share of the attention. Even in Part I *Imperialism* is a more complex and nuanced work than it is given credit for. In Part II Hobson went much further with a precocious analysis of the social origins and spread of jingoistic and imperialistic ideologies and sentiments. Imperialism, Hobson argued, acted as the 'first defence' of unreformed capitalism and the interests of propertied classes in society. But it also appealed to irrational sentiments that were shared widely in society and that were promoted by 'the press, the church, the school...' (*Imperialism*, 220-22). More than six decades later, from about the mid-1960s, elements of this analysis began to resurface without any acknowledgement to Hobson's pioneering contributions, in social-historical interpretations of late-nineteenth-century nationalism and imperialism.

However, *Imperialism* was not Hobson's only writing on the subject, and for all its brilliance, he did not always hold to the views expressed in that book. In consequence, Hobson's engagement with the subject of imperialism was extremely complex, in some respects even mercurial. Peter Cain's excellent monograph presents a sensitive, critical, and thoroughly researched biography of this engagement. The bulk of the work is devoted to narrating the 'diversity and changefulness' of Hobson's views on imperialism. Until the mid-1890s Hobson's political sympathies may be described as liberal-unionist and free-trade imperialist. He opposed Home Rule, had some sympathy for protectionist ideas, admired Alfred Milner, and although critical of the Jameson Raid, remained an apologist for the empire. Thereafter, as he affirmed in spectacular fashion in his writings on the South African war, jingoism, and of course in *Imperialism*, Hobson underwent a 'Pauline conversion' (67) to become the person we knew dimly until now. Yet within a decade, he was taking a more tolerant view of foreign investment in *Economic Interpretation of Investment* (1911), and regarding in optimistic light prospects for international cooperation to expand trade and investment in unexplored markets such as China. On the the eve of World War I he had come 'fairly close to an outright acceptance of Norman Angell's philosophy' (193). The war however seems to have revived and sharpened his anti-imperialist views, the earlier analysis of imperialism now being widened to cover the overseas expansion of the other European powers. But Hobson reverted to prewar attitudes in the 1920s as he became convinced once again of the need for free trade, international cooperation, colonial development under European supervision, and world government, and an ardent supporter of the League of Nations system including its policy on colonial mandates. Even whilst advocating the regulation of foreign trade in the depression, Hobson's optimistic visions for world trade, investment, and peace persisted into the 1930s. Only the developments of the later-1930s and the imminence of war appear to have persuaded him, in the end, of the relevance of the view of the world that he had expressed in his 1902 work, which was republished two years before his death in 1940.

In search of a 'living' Hobson, the concluding chapter of Peter Cain's study evaluates Hobson's views on imperialism in the light of what we have since learnt about it. The latter emerges from this demanding scrutiny with much credit: in Cain's own words, Hobson asked the right questions even if his answers did not always fit the 'known facts' (277). But since it is not clear that these facts were known in Hobson's own time, Cain's judgement is harsh and unforgiving of a man, who for all his seeming inconsistency remains probably the most under-rated theorist of his age. On the other hand, as Cain notes, the 'traditional lines of Hobsonian thinking' have drawn attention away from other insights in Hobson's work that remain relevant today, such as his thoughts on the rise of cartels and big business in *Imperialism* and the *Evolution of Modern Capitalism* (11).

What explains Hobson's 'inconsistencies'? Cain notes that they arose because as a prolific writer commenting on the great issues of the day as he saw them, Hobson tended to privilege

the present and its moods: when peace prevailed, social reform seemed possible, and militarism was in retreat, his writings were infused with a certain Cobdenite optimism about trade and international exchanges. But when imperialist war threatened or the world economy was showing signs of collapse, he was more wont to regard domestic economic democracy as the mainspring from which a genuine internationalism and less aggressive internationalism might flow. But as Cain recognises, Hobson's inconsistencies were also a product of the time and its politics in another sense, since the locations and political meanings of ideas such as social unity, free trade, internationalism, etc. changed freely between the 1890s and the 1930s.

Finally, which was the real Hobson? According to Cain, it was the Cobdenite optimist who believed in economic democracy and internationalism (238) rather than the critic of imperialism who attacked overseas investment as a byproduct of domestic over-saving and underconsumption. As the acknowledged authority on the subject, Cain deserves the last word. On the other hand, it is also worth wondering whether, whatever his hopes and illusions, Hobson's vacillations ultimately reflected more fundamentally, the impossibility in an imperialist epoch of realising a democratic vision for organising domestic and international society, and whether the re-issue of *Imperialism* in 1938 represented more than merely an acknowledgement of its relevance for those particular times.

Gopalan Balachandran, *Graduate Institute of International Studies, Geneva, Switzerland*

Michael N. Pearson, *The Indian Ocean*. New York and London: Routledge, 2003. xi + 337 pp. ISBN 0-415-21489-0.

Ever since Fernand Braudel's master-piece on the *monde méditerranéen* (1949), historians have been looking for 'parallel Mediterraneans' elsewhere as meaningful units of analysis. Despite the pioneering work of individual francophone scholars in the 1950s and 1960s, such as Auguste Toussaint and Alain Villiers, and a few isolated conferences, the study of the Indian Ocean Basin and its various components did not begin in earnest until the last two decades. Numerous volumes and international conferences, institutes, and workshops have been dedicated to diverse aspects of what has fashionably become known as 'the world's oldest seas', the 'newest Old World', and the 'cradle of globalization'.

With an impressive track record, including *Merchants and Rulers in Gujarat* (1976), *Coastal Western India* (1981), *The Portuguese in India* (1987), and *Port Cities and Intruders* (1998), Michael Pearson's latest work is, surprisingly, a somewhat unbalanced, incomprehensive addition to the maturing field of 'Indian Ocean Studies'. Pearson's 'ambitious aim', stated in his 'Introduction', is twofold: 'to write a more total history than has appeared so far' by covering 'about the whole of the Indian Ocean over the whole of its recorded history', and 'to describe both material and mental frameworks, the psychological as well as the geographical' (5, 9). His perspective is diffusionist, 'aquacentric' (Pearson himself prefers the term 'amphibious'), and 'Indocentric'. Thus, he wants 'lots of connections', with the ocean acting as a transmitter for 'disease, religion, tourists, goods, information, not just pepper and cotton cloths' (9-10). Rather than look out at the oceans from the land, Pearson argues, a history of the ocean has to reverse this angle and look from the sea to the land and most obviously to the littoral. In addition, Pearson calls for an anti-Eurocentric, autonomous history centred on India (118). Not until the nineteenth century did exogenous economic and technological changes represented by modern industry and capitalism, products of the Great Transmutation in Europe, mark a systemic or qualitative change (11-12). Pace Horden and Purcell's *The Corrupting Sea* (2000), Pearson sees this as the turning-point from a history *of* the Indian Ocean – an internal one using Indian Ocean-wide comparisons – to a history *in* the Indian Ocean, profoundly influenced by wider matters coming from outside its geographical boundaries (12, 287). Pearson, admittedly in accordance with his own expertise, takes what he alternatively styles